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# HEMAYAT: HELPING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN THRIVE

JANUARY 2015 – JANUARY 2020

\$60 MILLION

## OVERVIEW

Since 2003, Afghanistan has witnessed significant progress in the health sector. In spite of these gains, mortality rates for Afghan women and children remain among some of the highest in the world. This is in part due to the limited use of birth spacing and family planning services. In 2013, Afghanistan ranked 185 out of 201 countries on child mortality rates, and pregnancy-related deaths remain high for women of childbearing age. Under-five mortality rates have decreased from 87 per 1000 live births in 2005 to 55 in 2015, according to the 2015 Afghanistan Demographic and Health Survey (AfDHS).

USAID, in partnership with the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, is addressing these disparities through the HEMAYAT project. The project is at the national level and in 23 provinces where maternal, newborn, and child morbidity and mortality rates are high and utilization of maternal and child health services is low. Among other activities, HEMAYAT provides gender-sensitive and sustainable services as prescribed in Afghanistan's Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS). To access higher levels of care, the project will strengthen referral systems in hospitals through the Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS) at the provincial level. HEMAYAT supports the delivery of high-impact interventions to families

in rural and difficult-to-reach areas in Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Daykundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Jawzjan, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Nuristan, Panjsher, Paktika, Paktya, Takhar, and Zabul.

## ACTIVITIES

- **High-Impact Interventions:** Scaling up high-impact interventions focusing on “better care on the day of birth.”
- **Capacity Building:**
  - Systematically train health care service providers, the Ministry of Public Health, and professional organizations
  - Support the implementation of the Harmonized Quality Improvement Program as the tool for providing quality services
  - Improve community-based health care services by strengthening and expanding Family Health Action Groups
- **Task shifting to Community Health Workers (CHWs):** Supporting CHWs to provide an integrated package of High Impact Interventions through task-shifting.
- **Gender-sensitive Approach:** Strengthening integration of gender and respectful care in Family Planning/Maternal, Neonatal, Child Health (FP/MNCH) guidelines and protocols.
- **Establishment of Innovations Fund:** Increasing access, utilization, and demand for health services through the establishment of an innovations fund.
- **Integration of Family Planning and Gender:** Ensuring integration of Family Planning and gender equity throughout the Maternal Newborn Child Health (MNCH) continuum of care.

**System Strengthening:** Strengthen referral system between BPHS, EPHS, and private sector, including increased use of an established regulatory mechanism for midwives and nurses.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Supported the Ministry of Public Health to develop and implement a national scale-up plan to distribute and utilize chlorhexidine for newborn umbilical cord to prevent sepsis. Since project initiation, over 22,000 newborns have received umbilical cord care with Chlorhexidine -- proven to avert 15 percent of newborn deaths.
- Over 1,400 Post-Partum Hemorrhage cases averted with Misoprostol during homebirth in 20 districts in Badakhshan, Balkh, Faryab, and Jawzjan provinces. Nearly 3,900 women received Misoprostol tablets at the eighth month of their pregnancies.
- Long acting reversible contraceptive, the implant, included in the essential drug list.
- The Harmonized Quality Improvement Program on maternal, newborn and child health standards revised; and provincial quality improvement committees formed in over 240 health facilities throughout Afghanistan.
- Awarded two grants for innovative concepts in health care improvement.
- Supported the Afghan Midwives Association through a sub-grant to improve the quality of equitable, gender-sensitive health care services. The sub-grantee mentored 48 newly trained midwives on high impact interventions in 40 health facilities throughout Herat, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Balkh, and Badakhshan provinces.

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